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## ABSTRACT

This ongoing project, which involves the videotaping of classroom events, is being conducted in order to: (1) build a collection of videotape records of excellent instruction in selected classrooms and in various curriculum areas while maintaining the natural flow of classroom activities; (2) enable teachers and student teachers to collect videotape records of their work with a total class, with small groups, and with individual pupils; (3) provide equipment at the school site to enable teachers and student teachers to review videotaped sessions recorded in their classes; (4) provide equipment at the College of Education of Wayne State University to enable teachers and student teachers to edit or select portions of the videotaped sessions that they wish to retain; and (5) support the research efforts of doctoral students teaching at the Golightly Education Center. This project, which was begun in April 1988, is not an attempt to evaluate classroom teachers, and participation is voluntary. Videotape cameras, which have been set to either oscillate left to right or remain stationary, have been placed in the classrooms of participating teachers. Researchers will be meeting with these teachers to interview them individually and collect their comments about different portions of the videotape data collected in their classrooms. In addition, an attempt will be made to confirm or dispute general impressions established by earlier studies using this procedure or a similar one. An appendix provides background materials including videotaping schedules, a diagram of the placement of the videotape camera in the classroom, and an outline of the project. (14 references) (EW)

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## VIDEOTAPE RECORDING OF CLASSROOM EVENTS

by

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(Paper presented at the Midwest Regional Holmes Group  
Conference; Chicago, Illinois; May 14, 1988)

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## Videotape Recording of Classroom Events

### Background Information

During the 1960's we applied a procedure for classroom observation called "memomotion," which was initially introduced by industrial engineers to study the time and motion activities on assembly lines. This time lapse film procedure required us to place a camera in a classroom to obtain photographic samples of classroom events.

The representative sampling occurred over several days and we concluded that it provided a useful record of the activities of pupils and teachers in those classrooms. Ordinarily, we would place the camera in a classroom for a week before placing any film in the camera. During this time, the initial rush of pupil interest was expended, and the camera became simply another piece of furniture in the room by the time that we were ready to start photographic sampling of classroom events.

We developed a sampling procedure and observation schedule for recording and analyzing selected classroom events. A brief bibliography is attached to indicate articles which were written by Smith (1, 2, 3, 4) to describe the procedures and results of the application of this technique. Dissertations were completed by Bingham (5), Barnard (6), Burns (7), and

Nowak (8) to describe additional applications of the methodology.

As the technology has improved to permit videotape recorders and camcorders, there has been an additional spate of studies of the classroom using videotape. During the past five years more than 50 separate studies of classroom events were cited in the ERIC data base in which the classroom events were recorded on videotape for later viewing by teachers, pupils, students in teacher education programs and parents. Studies by Williams and Loertscher (9), Carrasco (10), Clark (11), Kounin (12), Myers and St. Lawrence (13), and Gardner (14) illustrate the continued interest in the information which can be collected through variations in the use of this instrument.

### **Purposes of This Project**

This is **not** an attempt to evaluate classroom teachers. We start with the assumption that these are excellent teachers who have been selected by their teaching colleagues and administrators to participate in this alternative school program. We are interested in recording the events which occur in these classrooms and observing the ways in which excellent teachers organize or respond to those events. We can identify the following purposes of this project:

1. Build a collection of videotape records of excellent instruction in selected classrooms and in various curriculum areas, while maintaining the natural flow of classroom activities.

2. Enable teachers and student teachers to collect videotape records of their work with a total class, with small groups, and with individual pupils.

3. Provide equipment at the school site to enable teachers and student teachers to review videotaped sessions recorded in their classes.

4. Provide equipment at the College of Education to enable teachers and student teachers to edit or select portions of the video taped sessions which they wish to retain.

5. Support the research efforts of the doctoral students who are teaching at the Golightly Education Center.

### **Procedures Followed**

1. Confer with teachers and administrators in the College and in the Golightly Education Center to explain the purposes of the project and to invite **voluntary participation** in this research effort.

2. For selected teachers and student teachers who agree to participate, place a videotape camera and recorder in their classroom for an extended time.

3. Establish a sampling plan to record classroom events as indicated by the classroom teacher.

4. Establish a videotape viewing site at the Golightly Education Center where participating teachers and student teachers view the scenes recorded in their classrooms.

5. Teachers and student teachers must have absolute freedom to delete any part or all of any videotape record of events in their respective classrooms.

### **Preliminary Results**

In April 1988, we installed a videotape camera in three primary level classrooms, where each one collected about 5 hours/week of classroom events. The cameras use available light in the classroom so that no additional lighting is required. The timing mechanisms are working so that the times specified by the teachers are followed correctly. That is, we have avoided a large collection of videotaped records of empty classrooms. Figure 1 illustrates a typical sampling schedule for one week.

The camera can record events within an arc of approximately 60 degrees and remain focused on that portion of the classroom for several days or weeks. It will also oscillate left and right to scan the entire room as the circumstances may require. Once set to oscillate or remain

stationary, the camera will remain in the mode of operation until it is reset. Figure 2 illustrates placement of the camera in a typical classroom.

We will be meeting with the participating teachers to interview them individually and collect their comments and observations about different portions of the videotape data collected in their respective classrooms. We will also look to confirm or dispute the general impressions establish by our earlier studies and by other researchers who have utilized this procedure or a similar one.

## Selected References

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9. Williams, David and Kyleen Loertscher. "Teachers As Naturalistic Inquirers - A Case Study," ERIC Doc. No. ED269447, 1986.
10. Carrasco, Robert. "Expanded Awareness of Student Performance: A Case Study in Applied Ethnographic Monitoring in a Bilingual Classroom," ERIC Doc. No. ED250933, 1979.
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12. Kounin, Jacob. "Classrooms: Individuals or Behavior Settings?" ERIC Doc. No. ED240070 1983.
13. Myers, Jeanette and Theodora St. Lawrence. "Drama as a Catalyst for Establishing New Modes of Classroom Interaction: An Anthropologist's Assessment," ERIC Doc. No. ED238049 1983.
14. C. M. Gardner, et. al. "Videotaping in a Naturalistic Classroom Setting," ERIC Doc. No. ED189087 1979.

# APPENDIX

# Figure 1 - Time Sampling Schedule

|       | Monday         | Tuesday                  | Wednesday | Thursday       | Friday |
|-------|----------------|--------------------------|-----------|----------------|--------|
| 8:00  |                |                          |           |                |        |
| 9:00  | OUT            | 8:30 ↑<br>9:15 ↓<br>MATH |           | OUT            | OUT    |
| 10:00 | OUT            |                          |           | OUT            | OUT    |
| 11:00 | ↓ L            | L                        | N         | C              | H ↑    |
| 12:00 |                |                          |           |                |        |
| 1:00  |                |                          |           |                |        |
| 2:00  | 1:30 ↑ READING |                          | EARLY     | 1:30 ↑ READING |        |
| 3:00  | 2:30 ↓ READING |                          | DISMISSAL | 2:30 ↓ READING |        |
| 4:00  |                |                          |           |                |        |

School... GOLIGHTLY  
 Teacher... MRS. WILSON  
 Date... 5/2/88 - 5/6/88  
 Grade/Subject... PRIMARY: READING GROUPS.

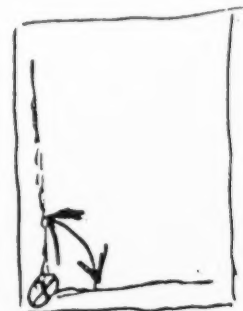
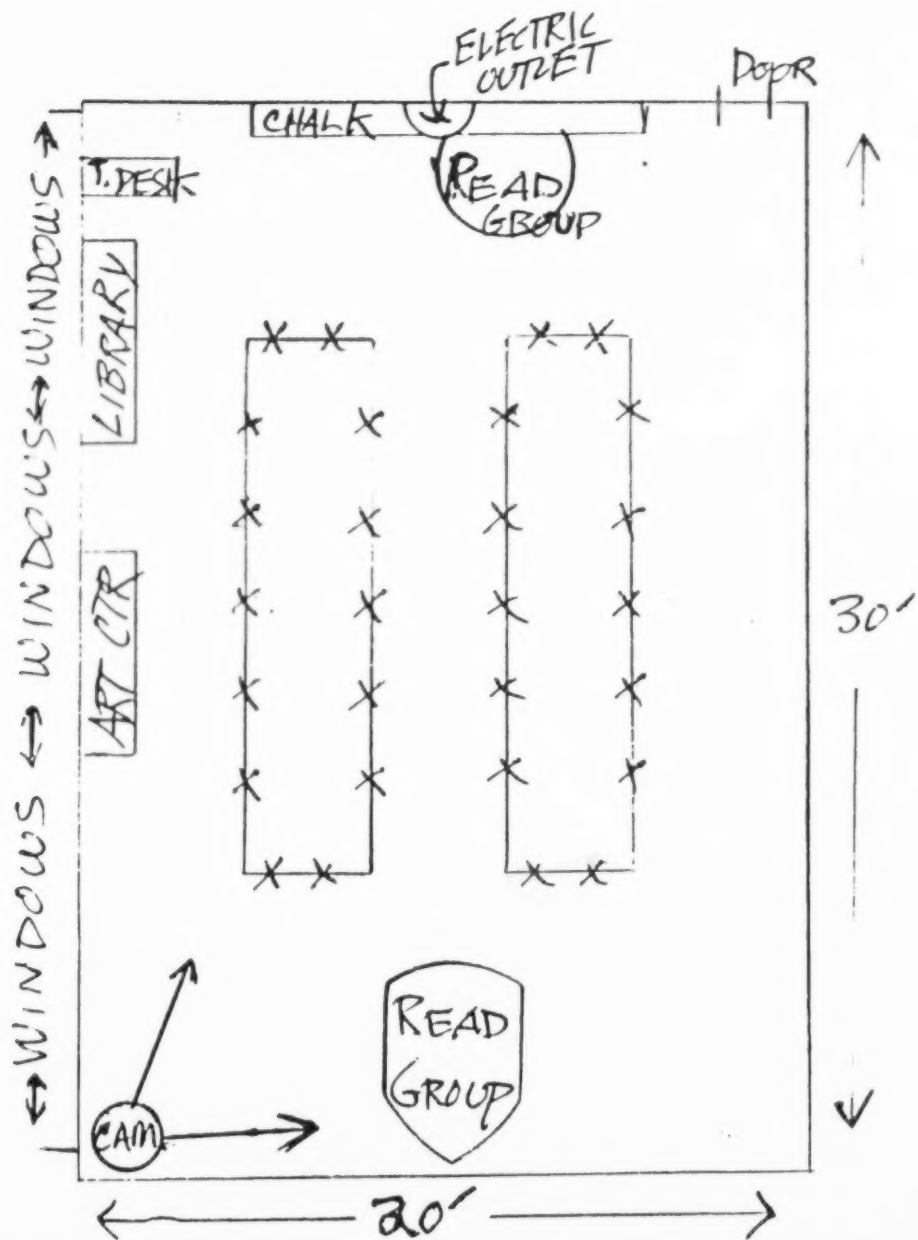


Figure 2 - ROOM ARRANGEMENT



## VIDEOTAPE RECORDING CLASSROOM EVENTS

1. Background Information
  - a. Early studies - memomotion, time-lapse filming
  - b. Video recording, camcorders
2. Purposes of this Project
  - a. Collect videotape samples of excellent instruction
  - b. Support teachers and student teachers with access to videotape recording equipment
  - c. Support research efforts of doctoral students teaching at the Golightly Education Center
3. Procedures Followed
  - a. Confer with teachers and administrators at Golightly and at the College
  - b. Identify volunteers
  - c. Establish plan to sample classroom events as indicated by classroom teacher.
  - d. Install videotape camera and recorder
  - e. Establish videotape viewing site at Golightly
  - f. Establish videotape viewing and editing site at College
  - g. Teachers and student teachers have option to delete any or all parts of videotape record of their classroom
  - h. Interviews with teachers to collect their description of events recorded in videotape

4. Advantages Expected

- a. Confirm or refute events recorded by human observer
- b. Visual records assist teacher in recalling circumstances of previous class activities
- c. Inexpensive, longitudinal samples of classroom activities

5. Preliminary Results

- a. Started March 1988 - too early to report results
- b. Collecting about 5 hours/week in 3 classrooms
- c. Using available light, but recording sound is a problem
- d. Able to scan entire room or concentrate upon teaching/learning centers